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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9989

INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY

RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0183

RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY 1054

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J5 MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHMFSS/DIRJIATF SOUTH PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO PRIORITY

RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// PRIORITY

RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RHMFSS/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000517

SIPDIS

FOR OPS CENTER, WHA/CEN AND CA/OCS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [CASC](#) [MARR](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: HONDURAN COUP:SITREP 5, 06/29/09, 18:30 LOCAL TIME

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 514 AND PREVIOUS

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Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b & d).

¶1. (C) Police and military units dislodged protesters from in front of the Presidential Palace around 16:00, and 40-45 arrests were made. Shots were fired but no one was killed, according to police sources. Earlier in the afternoon police dispersed crowds with tear gas, which reduced the number of protesters but caused the several hundred remaining ones to extend their perimeter, temporarily making the Marriott Hotel, where six official Americans and an estimated 40 unofficial Americans are staying, inaccessible by vehicle. RSO removed the six USG personnel from the hotel after the area was cleared. Hotel management, with support from the military, committed to move the remaining guests to other hotels before 20:00.

¶2. (C) An FBI agent staying at the Marriott witnessed the engagement. He said the police fired tear gas at the demonstrators, who were throwing rocks, bottles some Molotov cocktails at the police. It appeared to the agent that the police may have shot rubber bullets at the demonstrators. The agent reported numerous ambulances responded to the scene after the demonstrators were dislodged to attend to wounded persons.

¶3. (SBU) A demonstration in the Colonia Kennedy section of Tegucigalpa was also reported dispersed by tear gas this afternoon. A disturbance was also reported this afternoon in San Pedro Sula, the country's second-largest city. Protesters also reportedly set up a barricade on the highway connecting San Pedro Sula to La Ceiba, and the highway at Santa Barbara was reportedly blocked by the pro-Zelaya Bloque Popular.

¶4. (C) The EAC convened at 15:00 local time and determined to maintain the current security posture. The Embassy will be

open June 30, but most local staff will be instructed to remain at home and only emergency consular services will be provided. The official Independence Day reception scheduled for July 2 at the Ambassador's residence has been canceled. Official and unofficial Americans are being advised to avoid non-essential travel and obey the 21:00-0:600 curfew. An updated warden message will be sent out before the end of the day.

15. (C) Poloff received a call this afternoon from radio station Radio Globo reporting that about 60 soldiers entered the station violently around 09:00, destroying doors and windows and breaking the arm of an employee. The soldiers said that the station could continue broadcasting only if:

- no mention of protests;
- no call-ins;
- no criticism of the Micheletti regime;
- no talking about President Zelaya;
- no mention of the international press.

The station plans to continue broadcasting and to make a complaint to the Inter-American Human Rights Court.

16. (SBU) Cabinet moves: Embassy has been able to ascertain the following:

- Foreign Affairs: Enrique Ortez Colindres has replaced Patricia Rodas; Liberal Party Congresswoman Martha Lorena Alvarado de Casco has been named Vice Minister
- Defense: Deputy Minister Adolfo Leonel Sevilla has replaced Edmundo Orellana, who resigned last week
- Security: Jorge Rodas Gamero to remain

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- Finance: Gabriela Nunez, former Central Bank President, VP running mate to Micheletti and economic advisor to Liberal Party presidential nominee Elvin Santos, has replaced Rebeca Santos
- Central Bank: Sandra Midence, former personal assistant to Nunez, to replace Edwin Araque
- Agriculture: Hector Hernandez reportedly went to the office this morning to collect his things; no word on replacement
- Hondutel: Information Systems Mgr Jorge Aguilar to replace Jorge Rosa
- Trade and Industry: Status and whereabouts of Minister Fredis Cerrato unknown

17. (SBU) A Peace Corps volunteer reported that a call to protest in Catacamas, Olancho, went unheeded Sunday, but a few hundred students and professors at the local agricultural university turned out to protest in support of President Zelaya today.
LLORENS